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Hongkong, 1st February, 1871.

**BIRTH.**

On the 16th instant, at No. 6, Seymour Terrace, the wife of Mr. J. B. HORRELL, of a Daughter.

The Daily Press

HONGKONG, NOVEMBER 17TH, 1871.

In yesterday's paper we printed a somewhat elaborate letter from Mr. J. R. ROBERTSON, of Shanghai, in which he undertakes to show that the view which was adopted by the whole of the mercantile community and the Press in China, concerning the hearing of the Transit Dues clause in the Treaty was mistaken, and that there was nothing whatever to show that it was intended that foreign goods should be freed from all inland taxation after they had paid the tariff and transit rates, irrespective of their being owned by foreigners or Chinese. He quotes a variety of documents in order to establish this fact, but makes only a casual allusion to the Nankin Treaty, which is really that which establishes the point. The words of the tenth article are: "When British merchandise shall have once paid at any of the said ports the regulated Customs and dues, agreeable to the tariff to be hereafter fixed, such merchandise may be conveyed by the Chinese merchants to any province or city in the interior of the Empire of China, on paying a further amount of transit dues which shall not exceed — per cent on the tariff value of such goods." The sum payable was afterwards fixed by the Tientsin Treaty at 2½ per cent. Now it is very important to note this use of the word "merchandise." It is peculiar as opposed to the more natural expression that the Chinese merchants should be entitled to convey the goods; and may reasonably be taken to indicate that the intention of the Treaty was that the payment of transit dues should free the goods, as goods, and irrespective of ownership, from further taxation. At the very least this was sufficient to justify the view generally held by mercantile men, but as Mr. Robertson states in his letter, was always opposed by him as contrary to the true meaning of the Treaty. Why he should take the trouble to come forward now to reassert his views and declare that the principle recently recognised at Peking is a great concession, it is very difficult to understand. Sir RUTHERFORD ALCOCK, in his celebrated despatch on this subject, states: "The treaty right, therefore, is admittedly this, that all imports and exports being bona fide constituents of foreign trade—as distinguished from a coasting or Chinese trade only in foreign hands—may be certificated for transit, and sent from one end of the Empire to the other exempt from all other charges, other than the tariff of imports and exports and a commuted inland or transit duty of 2½ per cent., and this whether the goods or produce may be in Chinese or foreign hands." This he stated, writing on April 1st, 1869, was then the admitted force of the Treaty stipulations, and this is clearly all that the Chinese Government have recently recognised, on the question being referred to Peking in consequence of the action of the Shanghai Taotai, and it is really difficult to see that Mr. ROBERTSON has done more in the elaborate letter which he has published than showing the manner in which he became misled, and pointing out that at all events he erred in good company, as "My Lords" of the Board of Trade took the same view of the subject as he did. The mistake was a very natural one to fall into, but in the face of its having been admitted by the Chinese Government themselves that the provisions of the Treaty go to the extent of freeing foreign goods which have paid the tariff rates from all taxes inland, it would certainly seem that the question was at an end. Mr. WARD does not go so far as this in his memorandum recently reprinted in this paper; but that memorandum was written before Sir RUTHERFORD entered upon the negotiations upon which the statements in his despatch of April 1869, were based; so that it is well seen that the further discussion of the matter cleared up the errors before existing, and confirmed in the main the view which had from the first been adopted by the merchants. The existence of the Nankin Treaty cannot clearly be got over merely because Lord ELGIN held that the transit question was satisfactorily settled by the Tientsin Treaty, if the Nankin Treaty still continued in force; and that this is the case, is perfectly clear from the fact that Chinese Authorities themselves admitted the validity of that instrument. This is the real point in the whole case, and all that goes between its affirmation or negation is of no importance. It was urged on behalf of the merchants that the provisions of the Nankin Treaty were still in force. This was pressed upon the Chinese Government, and before April 1869, they admitted that the forces of the Nankin Treaty was to make the Transit Dues stipulations what they have of late been declared to be. It cannot, therefore, be said that this is an extension of the Transit Pass System and "a new and valuable concession." Of course, in speaking of anything connected with such a very antiquated country as China, the words old and new may differ slightly from their ordinary meaning. Perhaps a concession made only thirty years ago may be new; but at all events, unless the admission of the Chinese officials themselves is wrong, this concession was made on the 29th August, 1842.

VICE-ADMIRALTY COURT.  
November 15/13.

[illegible]

## LICENSING MEETING

[illegible]

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

[illegible]

ARRIVAL OF THE ENGLISH MAIL.

[illegible]

Eight fine seals were captured by the fishermen at Hell Bay, Great Inland, a few days ago. The men entered a "cawa," or cavern, during the night, and having procured a light, discovered the seals, and killed them with a stick on the spot.

**ARRESTING MEXICANS** (by Telegram).—From Mexico, the Italian Consul writes: "With many happy returns, commercially speaking, I envy your climate." From Mont Cenis Tunnel to "Thames side," "Thanks. How are you?" From Thames T. to Mt. Cenis T. "S'bout up!" French.

The Radical Committee of Lyons are prepared to require that all candidates for the Councils General shall insist upon the institution of an income-tax upon a progressive scale; the suppression of the Budget of Public Instruction, to be replaced by a national education; the abolition of compulsory and gratuitous primary instruction; the dissolution of the Assembly; and a general amnesty.

facts of the present, and the necessity of making changes in the strategic conditions of future wars. The Germans understand this so well, that they are doing all in their power to accelerate the corresponding work through the Mont St. Gothard.

The Statesman commenting on the election of Mr. Gladstone for Limerick, says:—"This election is something more than a simple omen. If the English had up to the present any doubts as to the real sentiments of the Irish people, such doubts are now dispelled. The English have elected for their representative the bitterest enemy of England, and the most zealous upholder of Irish liberties. It would be vain for the English to deny the importance of the election. It is a fact that the electors of Limerick just across the water from the election at Cork of the courtier O'Donovan Rossa, which was only a protest against the detention of Fenian prisoners; whereas the election of Mr. Gladstone was the most ardent proponent of Home Rule. It is a menace and a real danger for England."

ousounding that the bill, as introduced, was  
 ed, we must take the Government, and  
 powers therein conferred, will not sanction  
 erection of the Pier unless the Company  
 prepared to alter the plans now before  
 Council, so as to give facilities to Foreign  
 Chinese boats, and to admit of their  
 passing at short distances from the Pier  
 wall. For this purpose we consider that  
 there should be two openings of 40 feet each  
 breadth within 300 feet from the Quay,  
 further, that the Company should be  
 authorized to erect a bridge or swing-bridge  
 to be opened during boisterous weather at  
 instances of the Harbor Master, and at  
 other times as the Governor in Council  
 may order. The Government should be  
 authorized to direct opening should be  
 constructed so as to allow of a height of 10  
 feet from high water mark.

It has not been overlooked that such a  
 requirement as the last mentioned, in those  
 circumstances, would impede the traffic of the Pier, as

present credit for liquors at the bureau.

Some further points were discussed, when the Council suggested that as the Ordinance upon duty might be well to add, upon any act, as this would give time for consideration of numerous details which could not have been thoroughly considered as yet.

The Hon. Mr. SAUR observed that he had only just seen the Ordinance.

The ACTING ATTORNEY-GENERAL adopted the suggestion, and voted that the consideration of the Ordinance be postponed.

H.E. accordingly adjourned the Council sine die.

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**ALARM OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE FRENCH REPUBLIC.**—Lately M. Thiers has become very uneasy. He has strong faucoes of conspiracy against his own person, and is afraid of being assassinated. He has a whole of policemen and soldiers are constantly on the qui vive around the Prefecture at Versailles.

It is possible that to recognize the right of the State for giving due protection to agriculture and a favoring system of administrative policy. Nevertheless, in despite of the numerous edicts of Imperial exhortations, the crop of the poppy goes on as before. On this point, into the cause of this, it is found that the people have an excuse to rely upon, in the fact that the legalization of the duty on opium, the establishment of the duty on opium, has not been a concession to temporary expediency, and even although it may have been a concession to the necessities of the moment, and a large amount of revenue, it would not be the least that the levy should take place except at the present and outmost emergency.

Granting, even, that no immediate alleviation of China's distress is to be expected, still whatever import levies fall only upon merchants and traders, and not upon farmers with the levy of a duty on the produce collected only from the traders.







